

REMARKS

Reconsideration of this application as amended is respectfully requested. Claims 1-32 have been amended and are presented for the Examiner's consideration in view of the following comments.

Applicants note with appreciation that claims 1-23 and 28-32 have been allowed.

With respect to the Drawings, the Examiner has noted that FIG. 3 is pale and that, therefore, it is difficult to view all the details of the figure. Applicants have submitted a replacement sheet 2, which includes FIGs. 2 and 3. No new matter has been added. Applicants submit that the copy of FIG. 3 on replacement sheet 2 is not pale and that the basis for the Examiner's objection has been removed.

With respect to the Abstract, the Examiner has objected to its format. Applicants have submitted a substitute Abstract, which removes the basis for the Examiner's objection. No new matter has been added.

With respect to the claims, the Examiner has objected to claims 24-27. Applicants have amended claims 24-27 to remove the basis for the Examiner's objection. In addition, and as suggested by the Examiner, Applicants have amended claims 1-32 to better conform to U.S. practice.

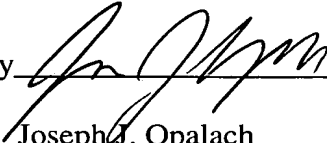
As it is believed that all of the objections set forth in the Official Action have been fully met, favorable reconsideration and allowance are earnestly solicited. If, however, for any reason the Examiner does not believe that such action can be taken at this time, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner telephone Applicants' attorney in order to overcome any additional objections that the Examiner might have.

Serial No. 09/936,033

PF990005

If there are any additional charges in connection with this requested amendment,
the Examiner is authorized to charge Deposit Account No. 07-0832 therefor.

Respectfully submitted
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CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I hereby certify that this amendment is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as First Class Mail, postage prepaid, in an envelope addressed to Mail Stop Amendment, Commissioner for Patents, Box 1450, Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450 on:

9/15/04
Date

Linda Tindall
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